

In Depth: The NSI, Training the Frontline

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Earlier this month, DHS Secretary Napolitano announced the expansion of the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR) Initiative (NSI) into six Southeast states, marking the fourth expansion of the program this summer. Key to the success of the NSI is training the frontline to identify terrorism-related suspicious activity.

The training strategy is a multifaceted approach designed to increase the effectiveness of state, local, and tribal law enforcement professionals in identifying, reporting, evaluating, and sharing behaviors and incidents associated with terrorism-related criminal activity. The overarching goal of the training strategy is to facilitate agency implementation of the SAR process and to enhance a nationwide SAR capability. The strategy involves three separate but coordinated training initiatives targeting law enforcement professionals with varying duties and responsibilities: agency executives, analytic/investigative personnel, and line officers.

Executive Briefing

Law enforcement executives play a vital role in ensuring that the SAR process is not only successfully implemented but effectively supported. The SAR Executive Briefings focus on executive leadership, policy development, privacy and civil liberties protections, agency training, and community outreach.

Analytic/Investigative-Level Training

Ensuring that SARs are properly reviewed and vetted is critical to promoting the integrity of information submitted; protecting citizens' privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties; and successfully implementing the SAR process. The SAR Analyst Role Training focuses on the evaluation of SARs to identify behaviors that may be associated with preincident terrorism planning and the process for sharing terrorism-related SARs nationwide. Through this curriculum, analysts and investigators are trained to recognize terrorism-related preincident indicators and to validate based on a combination of knowledge, experience, and available information whether the behavior has a potential nexus to terrorism and meets criteria for submission. This training is currently delivered in an eight-hour workshop format, and complementary trainings are under development.

Line-Officer Training

Front-line law enforcement personnel are trained to recognize behavior and incidents that may indicate criminal activity associated with terrorism. Their routine duties position them to observe and report suspicious behaviors or activities. The SAR Line Officer Training focuses on the critical role line officers have in the effective implementation of the SAR process by identifying and documenting suspicious activity. To efficiently deliver training to a large number of line officers in a timely manner, this training is currently available through [LEAPS.TV](#) ^[1], as well as through the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism www.mipt.org ^[2].

For More Information on the NSI, visit <http://nsi.ncirc.gov/> [3].

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